THE PORT FOLIO,

(NEW SERIES)

BY OLIVER OLDSCHOOL, ESQ.

Various, that the mind of desultory man, studious of change and pleased with novelty, may be indulged—Cowp.

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ORIGINAL PAPERS.

For The Port Folio.

TRAVELS.

LETTERS FROM GENEVA AND FRANCE.

Written during a residence of between two and three years in different parts of those countries, and addressed to a lady in Virginia.

(*Continued from page* 291.)

LETTER XV.

My dear E——,

WE got to Montelimar on the evening of the 5th of October, exactly one hundred and thirty years, to a day, since Madame de Sevignè stopt there for the night, on her way from Grignan: after all you have heard me say in commendation of that celebrated personage, whose letters I have more than once pressed you not only to read, but to study, you will be surprised that I should pass within a few miles of her daughter's residence without going there, and that I should miss an opportunity of contemplating the Royal Castle of the Adhemars, and the town of Grignan, and the grotto of Roche Courbière; but I had learned, upon inquiry, that the violence and cruelty of the Revolution had been exhibited with every circumstance of impious destruction at Grignan; that the Castle had been destroyed, and the burying-place of the family violated; and that the remains of Madame de Sevignè, after having been exposed to publick view, had been deprived of the coffin, which was of lead, and of the burial dress, to which some ornaments of silver had been annexed. The celebrated Monsieur de Saussure, who travelled through this country some years ago with his lady, had the satisfaction of passing an evening in the Castle of Grignan, and Madame de Saussure found herself, for the night, in possession of Madame de Sevignè's bedchamber.

The Castle was an enormous building, situated as Monticello is,

with an extensive court closed by iron gates in front, and surrounded by a terrace, which commands a view of barren plains, and washed hill-sides, with here and there a few live oaks, or a clump of olive trees. It is not to be wondered at, that Madame de Sevignè was not partial to such a place, exposed too, as it was, to all the violence of the Bise, which was so great at times as to break the castle windows with the gravel of the terrace. The pictures of the mother and the daughter were still hanging up, the latter, it seems, was a handsome woman, of regular features, but of rather a languid countenance: the mother was fair, had blue eyes, a round face, and light hair, with by no means that vivacity expressed in her features, which the reader of her letters might expect to find there.

The whole of the hill the Castle stood on, is a confused mass of various sea-shells in fragments, a circumstance which I believe on the authority of M. de Saussure, but which I should have been glad to have had occular demonstration of. I could, indeed, have passed several days very agreeably and advantageously, had I been differently situated, in the neighbouring mountains, and in those below Avignon, with such a guide as the *Voyage dans les Alpes*, and should have been particularly glad to have visited those quarries, in which fish of various sorts have been found petrified, or have left their impression as distinctly marked out as if done by an engraver; leaves of various trees and plants are discernible in the same manner. It is singular, that fish of various climates, and of salt and fresh water should be found intermingled; the same space, perhaps, may have been alternately covered by the ocean or by some lake, in the great changes which our globe has undergone, and the poor animals, of either sort, have taken refuge deep in the mud as the water ran off; the mud retaining the impression of the body committed to it, has hardened and become stone in the lapse of many ages, and the beholder is thus astonished with a form, which he could so little have expected in such a place.

I observed, at the first post from Montelimar, the spot where Madame de Sevignè advises her daughter to be upon her guard against the danger of the road: it must certainly, in former times, and when the river was high, have been dangerous to go along there, but the road has been since carried higher up the hill, which overhangs the low grounds, and the heart of the tenderest mother might be at rest. The road was now open for several miles, a handsome terrace, hanging over the Rhone; on our right, was a steep hill, with here and there a small vineyard, wherever it was possible for art to come to the assistance of nature; on our left was the Rhone, and, on the other side, were meadows at the feet of hills, which appeared everywhere cultivated and inhabited, with now and then the remains of a castle, or a castle entire on some pinnacle, which in former times was deemed inaccessible: these hills were the continuation of the Cevennes, which I had first seen from the place du Peyron at Montpellier. On our arrival at the Isore we found a ferry, where the attendance was as bad as in South Carolina, and we were some time crossing it. It was not disagreeable, however, to be detained near the spot

where Hannibal must have halted, before he directed his course towards the Alps, and where Marius was encamped before he had as yet accustomed his soldiers to the appearance of the barbarians of the North. Read the passage of Plutarch, and figure to yourself, that we must have been within a few steps of where those ferocious warriours stood, when they called to the Romans and asked in derision, if they had any message to send to their wives in Italy? The Consul Fabius also, though ill of a fever at the time, and carried in a litter, as Charles XII was at Pultowa, has illustrated this neighbourhood by a great victory over the Gauls; history tells us, that the agitation of mind, which he underwent upon the occasion, performed a cure; it was probably a third-day fever, such as they have so much of in the neighbourhood of York in Virginia, and for the cure of which, so many idle spells and charms have been invented by the superstition of mankind, but of all cures surely none was ever so glorious as that of the Consul Fabius. We next passed through the country of the celebrated Hermitage wine, and stopped for the night at Saint Vallier: the master of the house here, most bitterly regretted the war which had again taken place between England and France after so short a peace, and repeated the names of several British noblemen and gentlemen, who had drank deeply of his wine, and had given him large orders for it.

The country had risen for the last two or three posts into hills a little lower than those of the south west; the Rhone ran rapidly at their base as if struggling to get free, and their sides, except now and then a little slip of meadow, were entirely covered with vineyards, the grapes of which were now in their utmost perfection: figure to yourself what the mountains in your neighbourhood would be under this mode of cultivation, and, at the same time, very thickly inhabited. We were now within a day's journey of Lyons, and hurried on as fast as the roads, which are not so good as in the south, permitted us. We stopped for about an hour at Vienne, which in the days of Julius Cæsar, was a place of some importance, and contained, for some centuries after, several Roman buildings of great magnificence; of these not a vestige remains but one solitary monument; it is about forty feet high, and is on the road side to the south of the town: the probability is, that this memorial of some unknown person existed, as it now does, at least five hundred years before Clovis established himself in France, and yet has it outlasted the monarchy itself, and may, perhaps, survive the Republick. The town is irregularly built between the foot of a steep hill and the side of the Rhone, and must, from its situation in so fertile a country, be a place of considerable trade. We now ascended for some time, and beheld, from the eminence which overhangs Vienne on the north, a country not unlike that which I described to you, the day we first left the valley of the Garonne. The night and rain came upon us soon after; I will not therefore attempt any further description of the country, I will only add that we arrived at Lyons about eight, after a length of suburbs which exceeded in ex tent all that I could have imagined, and were received in very

handsome apartments at a very good inn.

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LETTER XVI.

——— ——— had left Lyons a day or two before, and as I found that the person whose protection I had principally depended on for him at Geneva, was not there, we felt the necessity of rendering our stay as short as possible. You must read in some book of Geography the history of this great city, which is situated at the confluence of two rivers, in a beautiful and fertile country; it carried on an extensive trade, and contained one hundred and eighty thousand inhabitants before the Revolution. I must refer you to the same source for an account of the various arts and manufactories for which Lyons was distinguished, and for the names and works of the illustrious men which it has produced.

As mercantile opulence was for a time equally the object of persecution in France, with nobility of blood, or sanctity of character, or respectability of profession, the same sad scenes have been acted here as in Bordeaux. The Lyonese, however, had the energy to take up arms against their tyrants, nor was it until after an honourable defence that they submitted. They bravely exposed themselves to the dangers of a siege, in defence of their just rights, and when it was no longer possible to resist, they supported, with a patience truly heroick, all the evils, that could be heaped upon them by a cruel and rapacious enemy. In their first efforts against the tyranny of the convention and its agents, they were for a time assisted by the Girondists; nor did their courage fail them, when that celebrated party gave way before the common enemy. Having ventured to punish their tyrant Challier, who was the first victim of his own guillotine, they soon foresaw the vengeance with which they were threatened and prepared to meet it. A city for ages removed from scenes of war, assumed at once, as if by miracle, the appearance of a frontier town; a military chest was erected, a paper currency founded on the joint credit of every commercial house of eminence, was put in circulation, cannon were cast, redoubts thrown up, and a commander in chief appointed: it required no solicitation for the young and active to enrol themselves in the regiments which were raised: those also whose age and infirmities or habits of life prevented the offer of their personal services, very willingly submitted to such occupations as were assigned them, whilst the women undertook the charge of the hospitals, and the children were to be alert in picking up the balls that might drop from the batteries of the besieged. I have conversed with a merchant, who commanded a company during the siege, in which his two sons, his four servants, and his thirteen clerks served as common soldiers. The effective force of the besieged never exceeded eight thousand men, whilst that of the besiegers was from forty to sixty thousand: with all their courage and their internal resources, the inhabitants of Lyons would scarcely have ventured upon such a contest, had they not relied upon the general fermentation which then prevailed in the south of France, and which ended so wofully for the people of Toulon. The king of Sardinia too, gave them hopes

of assistance, and a body of troops was set in motion for that purpose; but circumstances, connected, I really believe, with the safety of his own dominions, and with the selfish short-sighted politicks of Austria intervened, and the troops were countermanded. The Swiss Cantons were to the last depended upon for assistance, but they persevered in their unfeeling neutrality, as if Ulysses in the monster's den had remained content with the boon of being the last devoured. The emigrants, seem also to have lost all energy upon the occasion; they made no effort to throw themselves into the town, though collected, apparently for that purpose in great numbers upon the frontiers, and though the fury of civil war had rekindled a flame of royalism in the breast of the Lyonese. Assistance in short offered itself from no quarter, except from the little town of Montbrisson, at the distance of about eight leagues; the efforts of whose inhabitants, however, served only to draw upon themselves a share of those calamities which overwhelmed their friends. Under all these discouragements, and with internal treachery to guard against, was the siege protracted to upwards of two months, until the batteries of the enemy commanded every part of the city, and the daily ration of provisions was reduced to half a pound of bad bread: it then became necessary to surrender at discretion, but their general, the gallant Precy had made arrangements for forcing his way into Switzerland, at the head of fifteen hundred or two thousand determined followers, many of these were joined by their wives and some by their parents, whilst others were under the necessity of leaving the tender helpless objects of their affection behind them, exposed to the vile passions and savage cruelty of a licentious, unrelenting enemy. Figure to yourself the march of this devoted column from their native city. Gibbon's description of the effort made by a portion of the inhabitants of Damascus, to withdraw themselves from the power of the Saracens will furnish you with some idea of such a scene, but the exiles of Damascus, were more fortunate than those of Lyons, who having been compelled after several severe conflicts to seek for safety in flight and dispersion, were encountered by a still worse enemy than the soldier who had routed them; the peasantry of the neighbouring villages had been made to believe, that this poor remnant of Lyonese, were aristocrats loaded with gold, or foreigners whose object it had been to parcel out the territory of the republick among their different sovereigns; this, with the desire, too natural upon all occasions of siding with the strongest, was sufficient to put arms into their hands, and to steel them against compassion. They waylaid every path, examined every grot and thicket, and proceeded to the deliberate destruction of their former benefactors, as if they had been engaged in a hunting expedition against an inroad of wolves from the mountains, or any other savage race of noxious animals. Of the original fifteen hundred or two thousand exiles, not more than 150 effected their escape, but you will derive a degree of satisfaction from knowing that Precy was of the number. A lady, who had accompanied her husband under the disguise of a soldier, saw him killed at her side,

but was so fortunate as to reach the frontiers. The parish priests saved a few individuals, and a young man from whose conversation I have derived the greater part of this narration, was able to gain the cottage where he had been a nurse, and lay concealed there for a month. Of those who, unwilling to make the attempt, or unable from different circumstances, or trusting to some degree of mercy in the government, had remained at Lyons, the fate was infinitely worse: death in the field of battle, or from the hands of a ferocious peasant was soon inflicted; but death after weeks confinement in a loathsome gaol, and with all the circumstances of refined, unheard-of cruelty, which attended the executions of Lyons, was a termination that completed the sum of human misery. In addition to the common motives which seems to have influenced the agents of the government, who were familiar to scenes of distress, who catched at every excuse to confiscate the property of the rich, and who thought France overburthened with inhabitants, it was the misfortune of the Lyonese, that the principal personage upon this sad occasion was Collot d' Herbois, whom they had formerly known as an actor upon their stage, and had more than once hissed for performing his part badly: this wretch found the guillotine too slow an instrument, and drowning too easy a death for the purposes of his revenge, and it was by his order, that artillery loaded with what is called *langrish*, was pointed against the devoted victims, who were drawn up for that purpose at one time in the square of the town, at others in a field at a little distance from the gates, which had frequently been a scene of triumph to them during the siege. You may form some idea of the cruel disorder and confusion which prevailed at these executions by a single circumstance: on counting over the dead bodies after the butchery was over, it was found upon one occasion that there were two hundred and two, instead of two hundred, the number ordered for the slaughter of the day; two of the jailors, had, it seems been fastened by mistake to two of the prisoners and had shared their fate.

There must be something in the frequent view of destruction, joined to the oppression the victim feels himself about to be withdrawn from, and the secret sense of a good cause, and the hope perhaps of a hereafter, which not only buoys up man above the fear of death in the worst form, but renders him on some occasions even insensible to its approach; it was not simply with resignation, but even with appearances of joy and exultation that the prisoners marched over the fatal bridge, which led to the field of death; it was in vain that all was put in practice by their oppressors which might destroy the last energies of the human mind—they saw unmoved the battery which pointed against them, and the soldiers, who, to the disgrace of honourable warfare, were to finish the work of death, and the pit into which they were to be promiscuously thrown: the courage even of the women, many of whom were of an inferiour class in society, was not to be overcome; they were seen to tear from their caps as they approached the place of trial, and to throw away with contempt, the tri-coloured cockade, which the

pity of the bystanders had placed there. I have conversed at different times whilst I remained at Lyons, and since I have been at Geneva, with persons who bore a part in the siege; and were of the few who had escaped, or had been able to secrete themselves after the surrender. One gentleman, whom I saw dancing at a ball last night, had prepared for himself before the surrender, a hole in a thick wall behind a press, the back boards of which he could remove at pleasure; luckily for him, it happened not to be one of the many houses selected for destruction, and he remained there, as the rabbits in our country do in the hollow of a tree, descending into the street at night, and listening very frequently during the day to the search that was made after him: the press, he says, was frequently opened and examined; in his place I should have been afraid of their hearing my heart beat. Another owed his life to a female visitor at the prison where he was confined: she to his great astonishment claimed acquaintance with him, reminded him of his having once made room for her in a crowded box at the theatre, and being a person of some charms and some influence contrived to get him enlarged.

POLITE LITERATURE.

LETTERS FROM BRUTUS.

LETTER V.

To the Right Hon. Charles James Fox.

SIR,

The irregularities of genius have been so often observed that it has at length become almost proverbial to associate a want of prudence with the possession of a brilliant imagination. We easily pardon in others, and excuse in ourselves, an eccentricity of conduct which we suppose connected with the warmth of feeling or the energies of fancy, and set down propriety and discretion as homely qualities, to be valued, perhaps, but not to be envied.

If brilliancy of talents could excuse their misdirection, you, Sir, of all men living, might plead that apology. The variety of powers with which your mind is endowed; the extent of your knowledge, with the vivacity of your imagination; the logical closeness of your reasoning, with that overwhelming torrent of eloquence in which it is conveyed; the rapidity of your thought, with the accuracy of your perception; the intuitive and lightning glance of your own observation, with your just and clear conception of that of others—altogether form a combination which astonishes equally and delights the observer.

But it is by the application, rather than the possession of abilities, that men are useful or respectable in life; and this maxim holds particularly true with regard to publick men, to whom discretion in the conduct of their talents is more absolutely essential than to others, in proportion to the extent of their influence, and the importance as well as delicacy of the situations in which they are placed. In the course of your political life, Sir, such situations have been uncommonly frequent; and it was highly favourable to the celebrity as well as to the development of your abilities, that they rose in a period more eventful than almost any other in the annals of Great Britain, or in the history of Europe.

In those situations, Sir, the publick has not perhaps always done justice to your conduct. In the national temper of England there is a downright openness and good nature, which allows much to purity of intention, which pardons many errours in its respect for general good character; while, on the other hand, it is always disposed to detract from

abilities or success, if unaccompanied with these estimable qualities. Your great opponent, so long (alas! much too long) in administration, possessed the virtues of temperament, which, though they were often vices to his country, its generosity trusted and approved; and it looked with complacency on his amiable domestick character, to which the tenour of your life, and the complexion of your society, were known to be adverse. Your opposition to him was supposed to be grounded on personal resentment. Your opposition to his measures was attributed only to the turbulence of faction. The publick had just begun to feel his demerits, when your coalition with him took place; a coalition which the people felt as individuals, and could not, in the antipathy of that feeling, allow for party combination or political expediency. You suffered thus alike from their indulgence and their censure of that unfortunate minister; and they gave credit to the justice of your former accusations against him, only at that moment when your ill-sorted junction laid you under the mortifying necessity of retracting them. But on the subject of Lord North, the publick indignation has ceased, and we will not awaken it; though we may be allowed, with a retrospective sigh for national disaster, or a smile at national credulity, to wonder that so weak an agent could occasion so giant a mischief to his country. That country, in its wonted good nature, and with a certain reverence for misfortune and infirmity, of which he has not always shown them an example, has allowed his age to remain unquestioned; has left him undisturbed to the quietism of his nature, if haply it may sooth the pangs of recollection, or blunt the dread of that obloquy with which posterity will cover his name. Or perhaps he owes much of this indulgence to the circumstance of being so fortunate in a successour—"*Deus nobis hæc otia fecit.*" We are unwilling to disturb the present prosperity of the nation with a recollection of its distresses, or of those wretched ministers by whom they were occasioned.

From this natural and commendable propensity in the people to enhance or to lessen the publick merits of men according to their private dispositions, or private character, you have suffered a disadvantage which has counterbalanced all your natural endowments, and all your acquired information, great and extraordinary as we are willing to admit them. It is not sufficient for you to answer, that much of the blame imputed to you in this respect is unjust and ill-founded; for your friends to tell us of the candour of your mind, the benevolence of your heart, the warmth and disinterestedness of your friendship. Did the publick give them credit for their assertions, it would still reply, Why waste those qualities on objects so improper? why degrade them by an association with men so unworthy? But the publick is general in its conclusions, and cannot easily suppose particular exceptions to rules which experience has established. The people look to that circle of which you form a part, and involve you in that general colour it assumes to their eye. They cannot couple dissipation and business, and do not easily associate deep gaming and scrupulous integrity. Some of your friends publickly disclaim gaming, and are content to cheat without it: You play with that gentleman-like fairness which marks every part of your conduct; yet with the million, those friends of yours have the merit of their abstinence from play, while you derive none from that honour with which your indulgence in play is accompanied. The profession of play, like every other profession against which publick virtue and prejudice is armed, subjects to the general obloquy of the calling every individual, however honourably he may exercise it. Nor is it often that this general opinion of

the publick is erroneous; imputed degradation is commonly productive of the real; and an association with the mean or the worthless, if it does not corrupt us into vice, will at least blunt our feelings of virtue.

Some of your acquaintance will smile at the word virtue, when applied to political situation: but this is not the cant of fanaticism; it is the voice of truth and of reason, and a minister of England must hear and obey it. It is for the honour of our country that even private moral rectitude goes so much to the credit of publick men, that we can scarce recollect a popular minister who was not possessed, or supposed to be possessed of it. But there are certain virtues that may be termed ministerial, which a statesman must possess in order to be trusted. Industry, attention, integrity, and economy, are qualities essential to his situation; and though it is possible that he may take them up, as he does the seals of his office, for the publick use merely, while in his private capacity he never thinks of exercising them; yet the people will hardly confide in this occasional conformity, but will rather suppose that the habits of his life will outweigh the duties of the hour, and the bonds of his society be stronger than the obligations of his business. The few who are acquainted with the force of the pliability of his mind, may conceive him to be above the debasement of his ordinary occupations, or the contagion of his favourite company; b t the publick imagination is less ductile, and will not so suddenly lose the irreverent ideas it has formed of a man's private manners and private connexions.

You will easily apply these general positions, Sir, you applied them indeed, already, during the short time you and your friends were in administration; you assumed the grave and serious deportment which you knew was suitable to your office; you put on the externals of decorum with scrupulous attention; but the publick opinion was refractory, and we did not trust our sight against the conviction of our understanding. The solemn suit and its dignified appendages only recalled to our remembrance the blue frock and the familiar rattan; and we saw still at your side some persons who were only entitled to be there from their participation of those looser hours in which surely nothing was to be acquired that could fit men for the high offices of the State. We regretted this in your former, and feared it in your future advancement. Unless divorced from your former connexions, you must have risen into power, as the vulgar suppose of comets, with a noxious atmosphere around you, to blight the credit of the state, and to taint the purity of publick administration.

The minister of a great empire has other opinions to gain besides those of his own countrymen. The credit of Britain is one of the proudest circumstances in the comparison between her and the surrounding nations. You know, Sir, for you were abroad at a critical juncture, the effect which the virtue of a minister has on that credit: they are polite on the continent; and it might possibly not reach your ears how much that credit might be lessened by his vices or his dissipation.

I am afraid you have thrown away your talents, as well as sullied your reputation, by your adherence to men who were often as unfortunate in the objects they pursued as in the conduct they held. You have exhibited your eloquence with the dexterity of a prize-fighter rather than the dignity of a champion for truth; owing, perhaps, to that situation in which you had the misfortune to be placed, the most admirable of its exertions oftener pleased than pursuaded, oftener astonished than pleased. You indulged a subtlety in argument which sometimes vanquished your adversaries in debate; but, like other barren conquests, rather gained an increase of glory than an extent of power. Your audience contrived to

separate the debater from the man, and lavished its applause on the first, without bestowing its commendation on the latter.

This letter, Sir, is addressed to you by one who is of no party but that of truth; who is attached to no interests but those of his country. Did personal attachment or acquaintance weigh with him, he has known you enough to be fascinated by your society, and has felt the chilling virtue and unconciliating pride of some of your opponents. He calls to you "with a friendly voice," for the sake of his country, to which your wonderful talents have been hitherto almost unproductive. In modern men of your rank, talents, any ways approaching to yours, are of a rarity that enchances their value, and the publick cannot spare them to idleness, to intemperance, or to faction. We would call, Sir, on the patriotism of the citizen, or if that claim should appear too general, we would rouse the pride of the man. Did heaven form a soul like yours, and endow it with powers so exalted, to calculate the throws at Brookes's or to measure the ground at Newmarket? Think of yourself more worthily, Sir; leave those provinces to the Dukes of Piccadilly or Bloomsbury, or to any other Dukes or Lords, whose reputation no meanness can lower, whose minds no insignificance of employment can debase. But for you, Sir, thus to misemploy your talents, is a suicide of the mind, impious to heaven, and unjust to yourself and your country. Think how many events may arise to call them into important stations, when the war of parties shall have ceased, when personal distinctions shall be forgotten. Political prosperity is of very uncertain duration; and to states as to individuals, prosperity itself has its dangers. In opposition, or in power, your supereminent abilities must always be valuable, if you will but know their value, and point their use: but while you sink the one and pervert the other, though we may afford you our admiration or our regret, we cannot bestow our respect or our confidence.

BRUTUS.

For The Port Folio.

POLITE LITERATURE.

(*Continued from page* 297.)

Among other consequences of the incompetency of language to awaken similar abstract conceptions, we may consider as remarkable the diversity of opinion in regard to the ruling principle of human nature. By one party every action is derived from self love; while by the other this is thought degrading to virtue. However, notwithstanding the apparent opposition of opinion, arising from the inadequacy of language, it seems to me, that men of analytical habits of thought, can hardly differ about the actual process by which human nature is incited to action. For whenever any being is impelled to act, it is evident that the final impression by which he is induced to abandon the state of quiescence, must be his own: and that all men who are actuated whether to do good or evil, so far resemble each other, as that they yield to some impulse, or to the prevailing result of some combination of impulses, received through the medium of the heart, or head, which to obey, is more pleasing than to resist. This appears undeniable from the consideration, that as we can have no consciousness but of our own impressions, it is to these only, that we can be obedient; and the impulses of reason, conscience, sympathy, passion, and appetite, being often contradictory, we must be governed by that result, to which obedience is most pleasing, or resistance most painful. But as under

the same exteriour circumstances, different men experience impulses of an opposite tendency; there must obviously be a difference in their habitudes, or conformation. Now when these are such as to cherish impressions tending to the direct gratification of appetite and passion, uninfluenced by the injury resulting to others in the pursuit of this gratification, the slave of propensities so detestable, is universally stigmatized as selfish: but on the other hand, when any nature is so happily constituted as that sympathetick sensibility to the pleasures and pains of others, overbalances the desire of immediate enjoyment, the soul endowed with qualifications so favourable to human happiness, is generally distinguished as disinterested.

Whether this application of the terms selfish and disinterested, be consistent with etymological propriety, may be a question: but it would evidently be incorrect to assign a common epithet to beings whose habitudes and conformation are so different as those above described, because both act from the result of their impressions. In order to estimate them fairly, we must ascertain the route by which these impressions are excited; whether through the base channel of immediate appetite and passion, which degrades mankind to the level of brutes: or through the avenues of the heaven-born principle of sympathy, which exalts them to the rank of angels.

From what has been said, it follows, that if obedience to that prevailing result of our impressions by which we are most allured, or most alarmed, be considered as obedience to self-love; this must be deemed our ruling principle. But as I have already observed, the impressions of different beings are extremely various, under the same exteriour circumstances. Hence results innumerable shades of virtue and vice: and although as above defined, we must admit self-love to be the ruling principle of our nature, this does not in the least deprive vice of its horrours, nor virtue of her charms. For when we are impelled by self-love to pursue the course of generosity, benevolence, compassion, or any other exalted path of sympathy, we must become the objects of admiration and esteem: and when we are urged by it into the track of avarice, injustice, cruelty, or any other degrading route of selfishness, we must become the subjects of contempt or detestation. Perhaps a stronger discrimination between the best and worst of our species, could not be afforded consistently with any hypothesis, however flattering to human pride.

From the use which I have just made of the term selfishness, it is evident that I have avoided the common errour of confounding it with self-love. This errour is confirmed by the indiscriminate application of the term selfish, to all actions derived from the last mentioned principle, whereas it is only applicable to such as arise from that portion of our self-love, which may be subjected to the cold calculations of interest, or the direct gratification of passion and appetite. In this view the influence of self-love, is often opposed to that of selfishness; as when we are impelled by it to hazard life and fortune, in obedience to pleasures or pains excited by the calls of sympathy.

In considering this subject, it is remarked by the celebrated Hume, that the secret pleasure excited by good actions, is not the cause of the generous sentiment or passion, but that these are the causes of the pleasure. This is not denied by my hypothesis; but I add that the principles of our nature, whether they come under the designation of sympathy, passion, appetite, reason, or conscience, have one common mode of action on the human being, in rendering obedience to them, more agreeable than resistance; and that consequently there is a common medium of impulse, to virtue and vice, which I denominate self-love.

It will now be seen by the sagacious reader, that while I have nominally appeared to support, I have substantially attempted the overthrow of the doctrines of those who depreciate human virtue; for though I have upheld self-love as our proximate ruling principle, I have made it secondary to impulses, modified by the excellence or depravity of our habits or conformation.

ANALYTICUS.

For The Port Folio.

PIC-NICS.

By Thomas Moore, Esq.

We have been favoured with the following interesting communication, from the pen of the elegant translator of the Odes of Anacreon. It was designed as a "Prospectus of a Literary Periodical Paper, to be published weekly, under the title of The Pic-Nic;" but, from various circumstances, it never having appeared according to its original designation, this production is now presented to our readers, who will doubtless think it worthy of being here rescued from oblivion, and preserved as an honourable specimen of the talents of the writer.

Cœnabis bene, mi Fabulle, apud me,
Paucis, si tibi Di favent, diebus,
Si tecum attuleris bonam atque magnam
Cœnam. . . . . .

CATUL. CARM. 13.

Among the ancients originated the idea of Pic-Nic suppers; it is very true, among the Greeks and Romans. They had certain entertainments which they called *collatitious feasts*, where every guest that was invited contributed his share to the repast; and it was at one of these ancient Pic-Nics that the witty Cynick of Abdera produced as gentleman-like a *pun* as any popular dramatist could wish to be the authour of. Our moderns have recently revived these Grecian suppers, and instead of the pedantick appellation *Eranos* they have adopted the name of Pic-Nic, which sounds well, and has the advantage of finding almost as few translators as the other.

From this institution we have borrowed the name for a periodical paper, which we take the liberty of proposing to the publick. We thought it a title by no means inappropriate to a work which must live by the contributions of many, and to which, those whom we aspire to please, can alone impart the means of pleasing. Genius and taste must furnish the banquet, which genius and taste will deign to partake of. So much for the *title* of our paper. There is more in "the whistling of a name" than philosophers will generally allow; and Pic-Nic, if it comes not under the description of the "*nomen nobile, molle, delicatum,*" will at least, we hope, excite no unfavourable prepossession in our readers.

In stating the design of our publication, we shall not promise too much. We feel as sanguine as we ought, but we know the vanity of speculation. How very few plans are realized according to the fancy that projected them! how very few works will bear a comparison with the prospectus which announced them!

There are certain branches of literature, to which the objects of our undertaking will incline us perhaps

more particularly than to others. In the walks of science England has always been unrivalled, and the radiance of true knowledge was diffused over England before France had yet shaken off the nightmare of Aristotelian philosophy. In the bolder efforts of imagination also, we may defy the emulation of our neighbours; but there is a graceful levity of fancy, an elegance of trifling, so truly expressed by the "*lusit amabiliter*" of Horace, in which it must be owned we have seldom indulged with success. This happy mixture of sentiment and humour the French have brought to a most interesting perfection. They have even introduced it, to the utter confusion of pedantry, into works of profound erudition and science; and thus very skilfully transfer to truth the only fascinations which have ever recommended errour. Is it pride, or is it temperament, that has hitherto so checked our imitation of them? we have courted the muses, and won them; but the lighter graces of literature, what may we call the *younger sisters* of the muses, have found us so deficient in gallantry, that they all have fled to France, where their lovers are ardent and numberless. Let us try to recal them; they are not so dignified as their *elders*, but accordingly much more playful, more easy in the dalliance of fancy. They are not such *prudes* as the *musæ severiores* of the family, but they know the charms of delicacy too well to lay aside the veil; and if they correspond not so aptly with the gravity of the sage, they are much more agreeable companions for the man of the world.

If a humble example can tend to promote such a taste, the writers of this paper do not hesitate to confess, that they long have adopted it as their model for imitation; they intend to try whether English phlegm is justly said to be incapable of anything but vulgar humour and blunt obtrusive irony; and perhaps the charge will appear unfounded; perhaps our circles of fashion may yet have their *Oiseaux des Tournelles*.*

Let it not be supposed, however, that to amuse is our only ambition; that in imitation of the Spartan lawgiver, we are merely erecting a temple to the deity of laughter. Essays on serious subjects, if not puritanically treated, we shall always receive with pleasure, and submit to the attention of the publick; happy if in our selection we can separate morality from its cant, and learning from its pedantry.

In politicks we shall never attach ourselves to any opinion or party whatsoever. Upon this subject a sceptick indifference is always most conducive to the quiet of the individual and the state. If any object of ridicule arises from would-be patriots on one side, or weak-headed ministers on the other, we shall not refuse it a place among our pictures of human absurdity; but, as to further interference on the subject, we agree perfectly with Sir Andrew Ague-Cheek, and "had as lief be Brownists as politicians."

Poetry, of course, will occupy a principal department; and we beg to offer a few remarks upon the state of that Art at present.

According to De Bergerac's account of the kingdoms in the moon, the current coin among its inhabitants is poetry. How convenient would it be for our world of authours, if their lunatick brothers could transfer them this mode of payment! a man might live comfortably on an income of sonnets, and even set up a bank on the strength of an epick poem. But he also tells us that the officers of the mint, who are, we suppose, the

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* The name given to a society at Paris in the time of Ninon L'Enclos, at whose house in the Rue des Tournelles they held their meetings. See the Marquis de Charleval's verses in the *Bijoux des neuf Sœurs*. Of this society were Madame Scarron, the Comptesse de la Suze, whose elegies are known for their amatory tenderness; Saint Evremond, and all the enlightened voluptuaries of the day.—*Dulce sodalitium*.

criticks of the kingdom, must give their stamp to all verses before they can pass as sterling. Alas! we fear, such knowing inquisitors would leave most of our poets as poor as ever; for, seriously, though the multitude of rhymers has always been a complaint among satirists, we believe in the most scribbling era there never was so much rhyming, with so little poetry, as at present. Nothing can prove the decline of taste more strongly than that love for improbable romance, and strange extravagant fiction, which has so long burdened the press with all the garbage of distempered imaginations. In the early ages of Christianity, when the genius of Greece was declining, its latest moments were marked by such reveries of dotage and imbecility. To that period may be referred those numberless insipid romances, of which time has preserved us enough to make us easy at the loss of the rest; and of which we may pronounce, with the exception, perhaps, of the pastorals of Longus, and the Æthiopicks of Bishop Heliodorus, that their brain-sick absurdities are only to be equalled by those of our modern novels and romances.

This puerile nonsense is not confined to novels; it is the chief characteristick of our most popular poetry. Instead of chastely adorning the pure deities of antiquity, we are become Egyptian idolaters, and worship nothing but monsters! spectres flit around the deserted bowers of the muses, and the region of classick enchantment is overrun with devils and hobgoblins.

We confess ourselves old-fashioned enough to prefer the levities of a *Horace*, or even the philosophick badinage of a *Chaulieu*, to all the *terrores, magicos, sagas*, &c. which some "sweet creatures of bombast" have conjured up from Heywood and Wanley; and we refer their admirers to D'Alembert's explication of the systeme figure, prefixed to the Encyclopedie, where they will find such productions classed under their proper head. "*La Poesie a ses monstres comme la Nature; il faut mettre de ce nombre toutes les produetions de l'imagination dereglée.*"

Thus far, upon the general objects of our paper. We feel a proportionate zeal on every humbler subject, in which the studies or pleasures of the town are interested; and accordingly, one of our principal departments shall be devoted to free and unbiassed criticism on the merits of publick dramatick performances. The necessity of such a review, conducted without malice or venality, has long been seriously felt and acknowledged. With this conviction we undertake the task; and in the words of the illustrious Roman annalist, "*sine ira et studio, quorum causas procul habemur.*"

We may now and then venture our remarks upon the light and passing publications of the day; but we pledge ourselves not to aspire beyond trifles. Learning and science must go of course to the reviewers, while *we* shall content ourselves with such summer productions as may be *read one* fine evening, and *criticised* the *next*. Sometimes, indeed, we may come after the reviewers, and indulge a smile at their sapient decisions. When we find them, with other pursuers of literature, attempting to restore that parade of index erudition which has long gone to sleep with Dutch commentators on our shelves, and was only fit for those ages when a man's understanding was measured by the lumber of his library, we may be allowed to exclaim with Shakspeare's Gremio, "Oh, this learning! what a thing it is!" and resolve to use the little "writing and reading that comes by nature" to us, in ridiculing pedantry, and laughing at dogmatists.

With respect to news, we shall leave all foreign intelligence to the ingenious editors of the daily prints, whose manufacture supplies more than enough for the consumption of all our craving politicians. We shall, however, reserve a page for curious domestick information; and the an-

nals of fashionable life shall frequently claim our attention. How much the intrigues and gallantries of the great may tend to illustrate the general history of a period, is easily understood from all the French memoirs; and though our women are not yet such Aspasias in politicks, there is quite enough of talent among them to render their *egaremens* very interesting. We shall therefore record, oh Fashion! "*noctu quid facias ineptiarum.*"

Such is the Prospectus of the PIC-NIC. We omit those minute particulars which relate to the mechanical part of the undertaking. On the price of the papers we have yet to consult our Printer; and with respect to the number of their pages, we shall make them "in the fashion of stirrup-leathers," like Friar John's prayers, and "shorten or lengthen them as we think proper."*

* Rabelais.

MISCELLANY.

The following poem is a great curiosity. It is the production of the celebrated Charles Yorke, who was so nobly distinguished for his genius and eloquence, and who immediately after his elevation to the Lord High Chancellorship perished prematurely, in consequence of a sensibility too acute to bear the reproaches of a malignant faction. He was a most accomplished scholar, a very eloquent oratour, a dextrous logician and an honourable man. His political principles, to a loyal adherence of which he fell a sacrifice, were admirable. He was one of the *King's Friends*, and had he braved the insolence of Sedition and Rebellion, he would have been a most formidable opponent to that pernicious party, who in the years 1768, 1769 and 1770, as well as at other periods, produced so much mischief in England. The ensuing lines written by Mr. YORKE, at a juvenile age, reflect lustre upon his taste and talents, they have been thought worthy by EDMUND BURKE, to be transmitted to posterity. This is enough, independently of their intrinsick merit, to gain them a conspicuous place in this Journal.

Ode to the Honourable Miss Yorke, (afterwards Lady Anson) *on her copying a Portrait of* Dantè *by* Clorio. *By her Brother, the late Honourable* Charles Yorke, *Esq.*

Fair artist! well thy pencil has essay'd
To lend a poet's fame thy friendly aid;
Great Dantè's image in thy lines we trace;
And while the Muses train thy colours grace,
The Muse propitious on the draught shall smile,
Nor, envious, leave unsung the gen'rous toil.
Picture and Poetry just kindred claim,
Their birth, their genius, and pursuits the same;
Daughters of Phœbus and Minerva, they
From the same sources draw the heavenly ray.
Whatever earth, or air, or ocean breeds,
Whatever luxury or weakness needs;
All forms of beauty Nature's scenes disclose,
All images inventive arts compose;
What ruder passions tear the troubled breast,
What mild affections sooth the soul to rest,
Each thought to Fancy magick numbers raise
Expressive picture to the sense conveys.
Hence in all times with social zeal conspire,
Who blend the tints, and who attune the lyre.
See! in reviving Learning's infant dawn,
Ere yet in precepts from old ruins drawn,
Sham'd the mock ornaments of Gothick taste,
New artists form'd, each Grecian bust replac'd;
Ere Leo's voice awak'd the barb'rous age,
Oppress'd by monkish law, and Vandal rage:
See! Dantè, Petrarch, through the darkness strive,
And* Giotto's pencil bid their forms survive!
When now maturer growth fair Science knew,

* Giotto was the scholar of Cimabue, and the first painter of any genius that appeared in Italy. He worked at Florence: was the contemporary of Dantè and Petrarch, whose pictures he drew, and with whom he lived in friendship.

†Titian her favour'd sons ambitious drew;
Not half so proud with princes to adorn
His tablets, as with wits less nobly born,
Ariosto, Aretine, yet better skill'd
On letters and on virtue fame to build:
These in their turn instruct the willing song,
The painter's fading glories to prolong.
In later times, hear Waller's polish'd verse
The various beauties of Vandyke rehearse;
And Dryden, in sublimer strains impart
To Kneller praise more lasting than his art.
Friendships like these from time receive no law,
Contracted oft with those we never saw;
In ev'ry art who court an endless fame,
Through distant ages catch the sacred flame:
See* Zeuxis, warm'd by Homer's rage divine,
With rapture read, and what he reads, design!
See † Julio, bred on the Parnassian soil,
With Virgil's grandeur dignify his toil!
‡ Clovio, perhaps, like aid to Dantè ow'd;
Intent his figure on the canvas glow'd:
To Dantè's fame the grateful colours flew,
And wreaths of laurel bind his honour'd brow.
Thou too, whom Nature and the Muse inspire,
List'ning the poet's lore hast caught his fire;
With so much spirit ev'ry feature fraught,
Clovio might own this imitated draught;
And Dantè were he conscious of the praise,
Would sing thy labours in immortal lays;
His melancholy air to gladness turn'd,
Nor longer his unthankful Florence mourn'd;
Fair § Beatrice's charms would lose their force,
No more her steps o'er heav'n direct his course;
To thee the bard would grant the nobler place,
And ask thy guidance through the paths of peace.
Oh! could my eloquence, like his, persuade
To leave the bounded walks by others made,
Through Nature's wilds bid thy free genius rove,
Copy the living race, or waving grove;
Or boldly rising with superiour skill,
The work with heroes or with poets fill;
Then might I claim, deserv'd, the laurel crown,
My verse not quite neglected or unknown;
Then should the world thy glowing pencil see,
Extend the friendship of its art to me.

† Titian drew more portraits of kings and princes, than any painter that ever lived. Ariosto and Aretine were his friends and cotemporaries, of whom he made pictures.

* Zeuxis is said to have studied Homer with particular attention. He always read such parts of his poems, as were best suited to the subject he had in hand, before he took up his pencil.

† Julio Romano, the disciple and favourite of Raphael, was said to have a peculiar majesty in his compositions. He was the best scholar of the modern painters, and a diligent reader of Virgil, and the greatest poets.

‡ Julio Clovio lived 200 years after Dantè. The portrait of Dantè, here mentioned, represents him in a melancholy posture in the fore-ground, looking back on Florence, whence he was banished during the commotions in that state, in which he bore the highest offices. Clovio's great work is a book of drawings, to be seen at this day in the Florentine gallery, the subjects of which are all taken from Dantè's poem on hell, purgatory, and heaven.

§ Beatrice, the mistress of Dantè in his youth, who died many years before him, and of whom he speaks with affection. She is represented in the poem, as the guardian angel who leads him through heaven, as Virgil and Statius do their heroes through hell and purgatory.

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EPITAPH.

St. Bartholomew, London.

ON WILLIAM SHAW, an Attorney.

Here lies *William Shaw*,
An attorney at law;
If he is not blest,
What will become of all the rest?

The price of The Port Folio is Six Dollars per annum, to be paid in advance.

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